

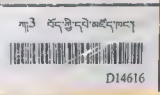


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RGYAN-DRUG MCHOG-GNYIS

SIKKIM RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY

GANGTOK

1986

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RGYAN-DRUG MCHOG-GNYIS

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SIKKIM RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TIBETOLOGY

GANGTOK

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To
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

INTRODUCTION

It was our privilege to invite His Excellency Sri Jawaharlal Nehru to visit and open the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology in October 1958. The buildings were not yet complete and the bulk of our precious Tibetan books were still in yak-hide containers, awaiting classification. All we had to show then were a few Icons and Thankas and the main central building which was to be the focus of all our future work. Mr. Nehru's interest in our endeavours and his enthusiasm inspired us in our efforts to bring to early fulfilment our fond hopes of setting up an Institute for the furtherance of Tibetan studies.

Mr. Nehru showed particular interest in a set of Thankas depicting the EIGHT GREAT MASTERS: Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha. These Thankas have, for some generations, been heirlooms of the Namgyal family and were painted by the sixth in the line of the Gyalwa Karmapa incarnation, that is, in the middle of the Seventeenth Century. They have, therefore, a special sanctity. Mr. Nehru's interest in Mahayana philosophy, evidenced in his own book *The Discovery of India*, has encouraged us to publish and present to him this volume of illustrations, with descriptive text.

The text is in two main parts, a description of the Thankas, with iconographic data, and an account of the lives and thought of the Eight Masters. Our intention was not so much to produce a work for the use of academic circles as to make known, through these great works of religious inspiration, the more important aspects of Mahayana philosophy and iconography to a wider circle of readers. We have, therefore, tried to avoid technicalities and to steer the middle path in matters of controversy.

Apart from the standard books on the subject, we have taken the opinion of a number of Lamas and scholars in preparing the text. We would like to make special mention of the late Lama Jamyang Khentse Rimpoché, Lama Gyaston Tulku, Lama Dodrup Rimpoché and Lama Lhodo Zangpo for their invaluable assistance in explaining the Thankas according to the Tibetan tradition. Dr. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, Professor Nalinaksha Dutt, Professor Tokan Tada and Professor Satkari Mookerjee were also

kind enough to advise wherever required in difficult points of interpretation. While acknowledging the great assistance of scholars, Lamas and others interested in Tibetology, however, we should like to make it clear that they are not responsible for the general opinions and findings expressed in this book, for whose final shape we are deeply indebted to Sri Nirmal C. Sinha, Director of the Institute.

We owe a special debt of gratitude to His Highness the Maharaja, who has made this unique set of Thankas available to the Institute and graciously granted us permission for their being taken to Calcutta for reproduction.

The Palace
Gangtok
5th February 1962
Water Tiger Year

PALDEN THONDUP NAMGYAL
MAHARAJKUMAR OF SIKKIM
President : Namgyal Institute of Tibetology.

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NOTE

Diacritical marks for Sanskrit and Tibetan words have been omitted. Sanskrit words are spelt thus: ASVAGHOSHA, AVYAKRITA, CHANDRAKIRTI, DARSANA, MAHAYANA, PRAJNA, PRATYAKSHA, SANSARA, SHADAYATANA, VAISESHIKA, VADA. Sanskrit and Tibetan words used in the text are shown separately in the respective scripts in a glossary.

Part I

Description of the Thanks.



BUDDHA

PLATE ONE

This Thangka depicts the Buddha in Bhumisparsa Mudra (Earth Touching posture). The right hand, with palm turned inward, touches the ground with tips of the outstretched fingers. The manner of seating is that of Vajra (Thunderbolt/Diamond), that is, the two legs are firmly locked with the soles visible.

The halo round the head is composed of two rings: green and white.

The seat is composed of three elements: moon or white, sun or green and lotus or blue. Moon stands for *sanvritisatya* (relative truth), sun for *paramartha satya* (absolute truth) and lotus for *anupalipata* (non-attachment).

The throne rests on white lions and buff elephants. The white lion stands for *dasabala* (the ten strengths which the Buddha possessed) and the elephant for *pratisambhidha* (correct comprehension or logical analysis). The frill of the mat depicts a tree, probably *kalpalata* (wish granting tree).

On the foreground the Dharmachakra (Wheel of Law) is seen in the centre of thirty-seven gems symbolic of thirty-seven *bodhipakshya dharma* (qualities for enlightenment).

The top piece of the altar is *ratnachhattra* (precious parasol) which protects all life from the affliction of *klesa* (suffering). Just below the parasol is Garuda, the giant bird with human limbs, depicted in bluish grey. On either side of the Buddha are five animals: Nagavatsa, Makara, Vamana, Pasuraja and Hasti. Nagavatsa's upperhalf which is human is painted white while his lower half which is serpentine is done in black and white. Makara or dolphin with elephant-like snout is depicted in white. Vamana, who has huge wings made out of tree leaves, is appropriately painted in green. Pasuraja or lion who is lord of animal kingdom has a bluish skin. Hasti or elephant is white.

The Garuda or the heavenly eagle represents the first *paramita*, that is, *dana* (charity). The Nagavatsa or serpent-child stands for *sila*, that is, moral behaviour. The Makara or dolphin is symbolic of *kshanti*, that is, forbearance. The Vamana or dwarf under the heavy load of huge wings, represents *virya* or endurance. The Hasti or elephant stands

for *dhyana* (meditation). The Pasuraja, the king of animals, represents the highest perfection, that is, *prajna*.

There are a few special features of this portrait of the Buddha. The two famous disciples Sariputra and Maudgalyayana are not shown. There is no rigid rule that the two disciples are to be depicted with the Lord. There appears to be a convention however that the Buddha in Bhumiśparsa Mudra, surrounded by the six symbolic animals and/or with the Wheel and Gems in foreground is to be shown, for completing the theme, with the two disciples. The artist here was engaged in depicting in a set of five Thankas the propagation and exposition of the Transcendental Wisdom and in keeping with his frugal brush omitted personalities not directly connected with the theme. On the other hand both lions and elephants are depicted as throne bearers, though conventionally either lions or elephants are sufficient.

The colour scheme for the animals is also interesting. There is no hard and fast rule about these animals except convention in case of three. Conventionally the lion (Pasuraja) as the sixth of the *paramitas* is blue; the lion under the throne, that is, the symbol of *dasabala*, is white; and the elephant under the throne, that is, the symbol of correct comprehension, is buff. The throne-bearer lion is a snow lion and the throne-bearer elephant is a bull. (Sanskrit *vrishabha* or Tibetan *khyu-mchog* does not indicate a bovine but a pachyderm male.) The artist followed tradition in these three cases, and expressed his ingenuity regarding others. The Makara (dolphin) is done in white because the Hasti (elephant) is in white, a similarity suggested by the similarity of snout. The Vamana (dwarf) is in green because his gigantic wings are nothing but foliage from the wood.

The three elements of the seat moon, sun and lotus are depicted in white, green and blue. Sun is conventionally shown in some shade of yellow. The colour scheme and the distribution of animate and inanimate objects strike a balance unique in the records of Mahayana iconography. The characteristic Tibetan style of congestion with so many Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, deities, men, animals and other motifs recalling remote as well as close associations is absent in this set of five Thankas. The colours and landscapes please the aesthetic cravings of the Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike.



ARYADEVA NAGARJUNA

PLATE TWO

This Thangka depicts Nagarjuna and Aryadeva. Nagarjuna and Aryadeva are seated on a raft on the surface of the ocean while the Nagakanya (serpent princess) is handing over the book containing the sermon on Prajna Paramita. On the right hand top, that is, over Nagarjuna's head is the Bodhisattva Manjusri in the cloud.

The story of the recovery of the Prajna Paramita is wellknown. The Buddha expounded the Absolute Truth, that is, Transcendental Wisdom to a select few and enjoined that this knowledge should be kept a secret from the others. The others must follow and practise the Preparatory or Relative Truth which the Buddha preached in his public sermons before they could aspire for any sublime knowledge. A period of five hundred years from the time of the Nirvana was considered necessary for the mastery of Preparatory Truth. Nagarjuna, who flourished about four to five centuries after the Buddha, found the text of this sermon among the Nagas (serpents).

Nagarjuna did not ignore the hearsay that the secret sermon of the Buddha was preserved among the Nagas. His adventures led him to the nether regions. He entered the palace of the serpent king and demanded the scripture worshipped on the altar. The king refused to part with what he and his forebears so diligently protected from loss or leakage for five hundred years. The serpents hissed at Nagarjuna and chased him out of the palace. Nagarjuna returned to the surface of the ocean and while he was resting there the serpent princess out of compassion for mankind stole the scripture from the palace chapel and brought it over to Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna then revealed the Prajna Paramita to the world.

Two special features of this Thangka may be noted. Nagarjuna was not accompanied by Aryadeva when the Prajna Paramita was discovered. Since each canvas was to portray a set of two closely associated sages, Aryadeva was depicted along with Nagarjuna; this was permissible under the canon. The artist provided a raft for both: the teacher and the disciple, a seat distinguishing the teacher from the disciple. The raft is of mystic significance. A raft is necessary only to cross the ocean of life and when one reaches the sublime land the raft has to be cast away. If there is no attachment

to the instrument of transport (Preparatory Truth) non-attachment to all worldly piety is ipso facto ensured.

Portrait of Manjusri on the top is quite appropriate since Manjusri is the lord of wisdom who destroys all ignorance and teaches the Transcendental Wisdom. The most common form of Manjusri is with sword (which dispels darkness) in right hand and book (Prajna Paramita) in left hand. Sometimes he is shown with four, six, eight or even thirtyfour hands. In some representations sword and book are rested on lotus stands. Besides sword and book, wheel (a pair), bow and arrow, noose and goad, Vajra (Thunderbolt) and Ghanta (Bell) are the objects associated with Manjusri. One invariable feature is that whether held in hand(s) or rested on lotus the sword or book is depicted in Manjusri's representation.

Manjusri in this Thangka is depicted with two hands and a pair of wheels in his hands. That is, Manjusri is represented in Dharmachakra Mudra or Dharma Vyakhyana Mudra; Manjusri is turning the Wheel or expounding the Law. This recalls the tradition that Nagarjuna's revelation of Prajna Paramita was the Second Turning of the Wheel. What makes the present representation so unusual is that Sword or Book is not depicted here. Such representation is unknown anywhere in Tibetan speaking countries or China. Yet precedents might have been there in India itself. The stone icons of Manjuvara, found in a few places in eastern India, show the deity with two hands in Dharmachakra Mudra, without the Wheels but with Sword or Book on lotus stand however.

The lion which Manjusri rides is usually bluish; the lion which stands for the highest perfection is of blue skin. From the present state of the Thangka it appears that the artist depicted the lion in blue-black.

Manjusri is seen in a cloud. This is an imagery based on Tantra. Concentration of mind and meditation project thought rays like clouds out of which the deity of meditation emerges.



ASANGA VASUBANDHU

PLATE THREE

This Thangka depicts Asanga and Vasubandhu, the expounders of Yogachara/Vijnanavada school. Bodhisattva Maitreya is on the top.

Asanga is depicted in white. A ray which comes down from the top splits into five different colours, touches Asanga and then ends its course in a white flame. Vasubandhu has a normal complexion. Maitreya holds a *stupa* or *chaitya* in his hands and is descending.

There being no rigid convention about portrayal of the two brothers the artist expressed his skill and imagination in his own way. Asanga's white is the expression of his illumined consciousness; he is a Yogi who has reached the Absolute Truth (*paramartha satya*) by inner illumination. Vasubandhu is pre-eminently a scholar and prefers the academic or intellectual attitude to realize the truth. He is still arguing and the imprint of scholastic negligence is writ large on his appearance. Vasubandhu's conversion at a late age is well-known.

The ray is the rainbow which in Tibetan concept consists of five basic colours: white, yellow, red, green and blue. In Tantra the five colours symbolize the Dhyani Buddhas: Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, Amoghasiddhi and Akshobhya respectively. The five Dhyani Buddhas are sometimes shown on Maitreya's crown. In Tibetan tradition the five colours also stand for the five divine wisdoms. The rainbow is thus quite in keeping with the canon—the colours have however considerably faded in the course of three centuries. The ingenuity of the painter finds expression in the white flame which reminds one of the ancient Indian tradition of holy flame which does not emit any smoke (*nirdhuma jyoti*).

The representation of Maitreya has certain special points. Maitreya as the Future Buddha descends from the heaven and comes in cloud which features a rainbow. The usual symbols of the Maitreya are Chamara and Nagakesara. Besides his head is decorated with a Chaitya. In the present case Maitreya holds the Chaitya in his hands. This is extraordinary and no precedent or parallel is known. Though extraordinary the representation reflects fully the role of the Future Buddha. Chaitya in Buddhist

imagery symbolizes the universe and the lord of the universe, as the Future Buddha Maitreya is to be, in the fitness of things holds the universe in his hands. In addition his crown may contain one smaller Chaitya.

Besides being symbolic of the universe, the Chaitya is associated with Maitreya because of a special belief that a Stupa on the mount Kukkutapada covers the spot where Kasyapa, the sixth of the seven mortal Buddhas, is lying. When Maitreya descends to earth he will land on this spot which will then open up and enable Maitreya to receive from Kasyapa the garments of a Buddha.

Asanga engaged himself in ceaseless meditational exercises (*dharmasrotasamadhi*) for twelve years on Kukkutapada hill. Here he transported himself by means of yoga to the heaven where he received enlightenment from Maitreya and brought down to earth the teachings of Maitreya on Tantra. In Tantra movements are not exactly movements as in physical norm but are changes of dimensions. In modern language therefore Asanga visualized Maitreya on Kukkutapada hill while in *dharmasrotasamadhi*. The imagery of the artist wonderfully fits in with either interpretation of Asanga's meeting with Maitreya.



DIGNAGA DHARMAKIRTI

PLATE FOUR

This Thangka depicts Dignaga and Dharmakirti. The Bodhisattva in the cloud is Kshitigarbha.

Dignaga and Dharmakirti were the great masters of logic and experts in polemics. The artist depicts this in the facial expressions and gesture of the hands. Notwithstanding the skilful portrayal of the two logicians the interest in this portrait is in the Bodhisattva on the top.

The Bodhisattva depicted here is reputed to be Kshitigarbha. The choice of Kshitigarbha to adorn the portrait of Dignaga and Dharmakirti requires an explanation. Manjusri is the deity associated with Dignaga. The story of Manjusri's intervention when Dignaga in a mood of frustration was preparing for his individual Nirvana is wellknown; Manjusri's exhortation was the prime inspiration for Dignaga's grand treatise on logic. Since however Manjusri is already depicted in the portrait of Nagarjuna and Aryadeva, the artist had a choice. If there are eight separate portraits for the eight masters Manjusri is depicted with Nagarjuna, Maitreya with Asanga and other six Bodhisattvas according to the artist's own imagination. Thus it becomes a matter of choice. What however makes this illustration of Kshitigarbha unique is the object in his hand and his ride.

The object in the hand of the Bodhisattva here is a disc studded with gems. In Indian tradition Kshitigarbha's symbols are Kalpataru (wish granting tree) and Kumbha (vase). Avalokitesvara in the form of Kshitigarbha holds in one of his hands a plate of gems. In Tibetan tradition he displays Sne-ma (Sanskrit: Manjari/Vallari) or blossoms. The object which Kshitigarbha displays here is more an ornament like Kundala (ear-ring) or Valaya (bracelet) than some flora. Kshitigarbha's ride is shown to be rhinoceros here. Except that the rhinoceros stands for the best, the singleness or the acme, no written tradition about the animal's place in iconography is available.

Representation of rhinoceros in a portrait depicting two ancient authorities on epistemology may be of significance to the modern investigator into symbolism. Jung's theory of the Unconscious being the matrix of all symbols is very largely built on the paradigm of unicorn. (*Psychology and Alchemy*, London 1953).

PLATE FIVE

This Thangka depicts Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha. On the top is Samantabhadra. On the foreground a man with a jug tacked to a wicker basket on his back leads a deer.

There is no special point in the portraiture of the two masters of Vinaya. The special points of the picture are the Bodhisattva and the figures in the foreground.

The Bodhisattva is identified with Samantabhadra. The blue porcelain vase in his hands, his headdress, and his robes point towards Chinese influence in the painting. In Indian tradition Samantabhadra has so many symbols but not vase; a popular symbol is a bunch of jewels. In Tibetan tradition Samantabhadra has the symbols Chintamani (jewel) and scroll. A popular form is as seated on elephant. He may be depicted in yellow (golden), green or blue. In this Thangka the canonical requirements seem to be satisfied in the yellow complexion of the deity, the predominance of green in his robes and the vase of jewels.

It is indeed an unconventional representation of Samantabhadra and does not rigidly follow Indian, Tibetan or even Chinese tradition. The vase held against the chest reminds one of the vase for consecration (Abhisheka-Kalasa) containing the water which bestows immortality, that is life eternal, on the neophytes.

The life eternal or the infinite life is the theme of the figures in the foreground. The quest for immortality in trans-physical (ultra-physical) sense as in the ancient tradition of India found symbolic expression in Tibet, first in its north-eastern border lands, in six objects : rock, water, flora, man, bird and deer. If all the symbols are not depicted together there is generally a choice between four, that is, man, water, flora and deer or one, that is, man. The artist here depicts the four but in an exquisite fashion puts the man in the lead ; the deer is having a happy feel of the grass in the basket.

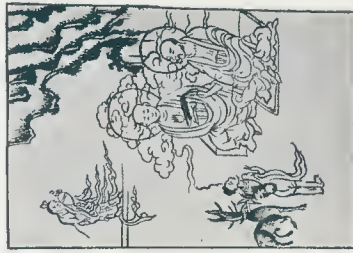
Choice of the motif symbolizing life eternal (Tibetan *tshering* corresponds to Sanskrit *ananta jivana*) is a testimony to the painter's greatness as a scholar and a sage. A series which depicts the theme of Transcendental Wisdom and begins with the prologue of the Bodhi ends appropriately with the epilogue of immortality.



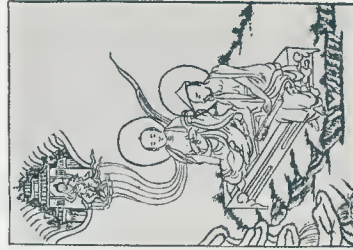
GUNAPRABHA SAKYAPRABHA

Part II

Lives and Thoughts of the Eight Masters



Gunaprabha Sakyaprabha



Asanga Vasubandhu



Buddha



Aryadeva Nagarjuna



Dignaga Dharmakirti

THE BUDDHA

Though entitled RGYAN-DRUG MCHOG-GNYIS (SIX ORNAMENTS AND TWO EXCELLENTS) the series illustrates besides these Eight Masters the Buddha. The Buddha is the centre-piece and forms the theme of one Thangka while the Eight Masters are depicted in four others, that is, two Masters in each. Though not conventional—portraits of these Masters do not always have the Buddha as the prologue—the present set is a reminder that the Masters were the spiritual sons of the Buddha, that is, they were not independent of the Buddha. These Masters enriched and supplemented the word of the Buddha by their distinctive interpretations and contributions. Thus in Tibetan iconography as in Tibetan literature, whether the Buddha is depicted or not, the Masters follow the trail blazed by the Buddha. (Plates 6 and 7 indicate the order in which the Thankas depicting the Eight Masters are displayed.)

Any presentation of the lives and teachings of the Eight Masters has therefore to be prefaced by an account of the Buddha's teachings.

It is not easy to be precise about the Buddha's teachings. If any one particular concept is to be cited as his fundamental theory one cannot but mention Pratitya Samutpada or the Law of Causation (Law of Interdependence) which the great commentator Chandra-kirti (7th Century A. C.) described as the matrix of all the Buddhas.

On the night of his Bodhi (Enlightenment) Siddhartha Gautama realized the inexorable law which causes things or events to happen. Out of *avidya* (ignorance) arise the *samskaras* (conformations or predispositions), from the *samskaras* springs *vinjana* (consciousness), from *vinjana* springs *nama-rupa* (name and form or mind and body), from *nama-rupa* springs *shadayatana* (six senses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, skin, and mind), from *shadayatana* springs *sparsa* (contact), from *sparsa* springs *vedana* (sensation or emotion), from *vedana* springs *trishna* (craving), from *trishna* springs *upadana* (attachment to existence), from *upadana* springs *bhava* (becoming), from *bhava* springs *jati* (birth or rebirth) and from *jati* springs *jaramarana* (ageing and death). Such is the origin of the worldly suffering. On the other hand by the eradication of ignorance (*avidya*), the evil tendencies (*samskaras*) cease ; by the destruction of evil tendencies, all consciousness (*vinjana*) is destroyed ; by

the destruction of consciousness, the notions of mind and body (*nama-rupa*) are destroyed ; by the destruction of the notions of mind and body, the six senses (*shadayatana*) are destroyed ; by the destruction of the six senses, contact (*sparsa*) is destroyed ; by the destruction of contact, sensation (*vedana*) is destroyed ; by the destruction of sensation, craving (*trishna*) is destroyed ; by the destruction of craving, attachment (*upadana*) is destroyed ; by the destruction of attachment, becoming (*bhava*) is destroyed ; by the destruction of becoming, birth (*jati*) is destroyed ; by the destruction of birth ageing and death, pain and suffering, dejection and despair are destroyed. Such is the cessation of *duhkha*, that is, the whole mass of suffering.

Ignorance or *avidya* is the root of all suffering or *duhkha*. The redress is in the knowledge (*vidya*) which can lead to emancipation from the whole mass of suffering, that is, Nirvana. The Buddha prescribed the necessary remedy indeed in the manner of a physician. Among the Mahayana appellations of the Buddha one is Bhaishajyaguru (Master of Medicine).

The remedy against suffering as revealed to Siddhartha Gautama on the night of Enlightenment was presented in the First Sermon in the form of Four Noble Truths (Chattvari Aryasatyan). These are : (i) that mundane existence is full of misery (*duhkha*) ; (ii) that cravings etc are the causes of mundane existence (*samudaya*) ; (iii) that mundane existence can be terminated (*nirodha*) by the destruction of cravings etc. ; and (iv) that there is a path (*marga*) for destruction of cravings etc. The path is the Eight Fold Way namely, right speech, right action, right means of livelihood, right exertion, right mindedness, right meditation, right resolution and right point of view.

The Buddha laid exclusive stress on personal endeavour, that is, on man's own striving for escape from suffering and ruled out the prospects of God's Grace or Divine Dispensation. He accepted the law of *karma* (action) but denied the existence of a *karaka* (actor) like the Brahmanic atman. The "being" which undergoes births and rebirths in the Buddha's doctrine is not the same as the "eternal being" of the Brahmanical doctrine. Everything is transitory and everything is in a flux. *Sarvam anityam sarvam sunyam*.

Here was a doctrine which was more a code of ethics than a religion in the regular sense. Even the philosophy behind this code of ethics was not so much an exploration into ultimate reality as a statement of facts in the manner of science. The Buddha was more insistent on the people comprehending the Law of Causation than on anything else. "One who realizes the Pratitya Samutpada realizes the Truth ; one who sees the Truth sees the Buddha."

All questions about origins and ends of existence the Buddha sturdily refused to answer. He described these as undetermined issues (*avyakritavastuni*). These were : (1) whether the universe is eternal or not ; (2) whether the universe is finite or not ; (3) whether the life is identical with the body or not ; and (4) whether the *Tathagata* (a released person) exists after death or does not.

For more than fifteen centuries from the time of the Buddha's death scholars and seers, Buddhist as well as Brahmanical, debated on the Buddha's notions about ultimate reality. Since the Buddha did not yield to, or lay down, any dogma the only acceptable weapons in this battle of intellect were logic and epistemology.

The Buddhist exponents and commentators can be grouped into four classes : (1) the

direct realists (*vaibhashika*) ; (2) the critical realists (*sautantrika*) ; (3) the absolutists (*sunyavadi* or *madhyamika*) ; and (4) the idealists (*vijnanavadi* or *yogachara*).

The first two groups upheld the reality of the world while the other two groups rejected such notions. The first two belonged to the tradition known as Sarvastivada (Theravada) while the other two belonged to the tradition known as Mahayana.

The Vaibhashikas attributed reality to internal (*abahya*) and external (*bahya*) elements on the score of direct perception (*pratyaksha* or *grahana*). They held that all notions and inferences were derived from perception of the objects. For them Nirvana was a reality, a positive concept. Among Vaibhashika exponents Katyayniputra and Sanghabhadra were the foremost.

The Sautantrikas admitted cognition but attributed reality to external objects on the score of inference (*anumana*). Perception is ruled out because the objects are all momentary. For them Nirvana was negative, that is, not a matter of perception. Dharmottara, Kumara-labdha and Sri-labdha were the principal exponents of Sautrantika

The Madhyamikas avoided the two extremes of absolute reality and total unreality of phenomena. They chose a middle path in keeping with the Buddha's example in the matter of spiritual discipline as in his refusal to speak on the undetermined issues. The Madhyamikas refused to be categorical and took a relative view of things. The one firm fact was the Law of Causation. All objects were in a way figments of imagination and therefore unreal. The ultimate reality (*paramartha sat*) was the realization of the illusion of all our standards and values (*Sunyata*). Attainment of this was Nirvana. Otherwise Nirvana could not be defined. Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and Asvaghosha were the first patriarchs of Madhyamika. Chandrakirti and Santideva were the foremost exponents in later days.

The Yogachara held that the practice of Yoga alone could lead to enlightenment and denied the existence of all objects except the mind (*chitta*). The only reality was cognition or consciousness (*vijnana*). This was a fundamental difference with the Madhyamikas to whom everything including the mind were unreal. Besides while intellect (*jnana*) was the Sunyavadi's instrument for enlightenment, meditation (*yoga*) was the means for the Vijnanavadi. For them Nirvana was in the realization of *vijnaptimatratata*, that is, mind (*Chitta*) anchored to its full awareness and not drawn to the phenomena of the world. Maitreyanatha, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti and Santarakshita formed the lineage of Yogachara thought.

Record of these explorations and experiences on the issue of ultimate reality forms a literature unique in the annals of human thought. The vastness of this literature is as much a challenge to modern enquiry as are its varied contents. Available mainly in Tibetan and Chinese translations trustworthiness of which is fully corroborated by the few extant originals, this literature is no doubt scholastic and polemical. But this is only one facet of it. The dialectic was a necessary apparatus since no quarters were to be given to dogma or intuition. It was thus not an academic tournament without any purpose. If it was an intellectual pursuit it was for a high moral end; if it was a scientific enquiry it was for obtaining deliverance from misery (*duhkha*). If one pondered over the three fundamentals of Impermanence (*anitya*), Sorrow (*duhkha*) and Non-self (*anatman*) one's desire for mundane enjoyment would dissolve and lead him to Nirvana (cessation from misery). All the sage-scholars participating in this debate started and concluded with this firm position. It was the razor's edge. It is amazing how they argued

in an amoral fashion which was serving a high morality. Modern scholars have found that they anticipated the thought processes of Kant, Hegel and Bradley and had even an objective awareness of embryological and psychological facts which astonish modern experts. Though their approach was quite different from modern materialists as from the materialist school of ancient India they could admit the provisional validity of the material world. Above all the concept of Sunyata anticipated that of Relativity.

These sage-scholars were indeed free thinkers and practised a tolerance which broke through the barriers of sects and schools. A Realist would thus live with peace in a Mahayana establishment and an Idealist in a Sarvastivadi monastery. Conversions and re-conversions were natural. Most fearless thinkers as they were, none of them was bound by his own ego.

With the decline of Buddhism in the plains of India this heritage found a new home in the Himalayas and trans-Himalayas. The priceless treasures of Indian literature were not only translated but also enriched with further expositions and commentaries in Tibet, Mongolia, China and Japan.

Indian masters who flourished long before Buddhism became the established religion all over Tibet, Mongolia and China were the objects of same intimate adoration in these countries as were the monks and saints who preached the doctrine there. Reference may be made to the massive collections and galleries which preserve the memories of the numerous Mahayana sages and scholars as for example in Sakya, Samye, Tsorphu, Gatho, or Tashi Lhumpo. The foremost among them are Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakirti, Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha and are collectively called Six Ornaments and Two Excellents. While all these eight are well-known in all Mahayana countries the grouping of the eight and their collective adoration is a speciality of Tibetan tradition.

These Eight Masters are generally depicted individually that is one in one canvas. In the set under review they are depicted in four Thankas, two in each. The four groups of pairs—Nagarjuna and Aryadeva, Asanga and Vasubandhu, Dignaga and Dharmakirti, Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha—represent, according to the tradition of Sera, philosophy (Transcendental Wisdom), meditation (from Maitreya), scholarship (logic) and discipline (Vinaya) respectively. Others would describe these groups as just representative of Madhyamika, Yogachara, Pramana and Vinaya. The sequence of the portraits is followed here in describing the lives and thoughts of the Eight Masters.



Sakyaprabha



Gunaprabha



Dharmakirti



Dignaga



Vasubandhu



Asanga



Aryadeva



Nagarjuna

NAGARJUNA

Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese traditions concur in holding that Nagarjuna flourished about four hundred years after the Nirvana. Nirvana according to Tibetan tradition took place in 433 B.C. The generally accepted date for the Nirvana is 486 B.C. Taranatha makes Nagarjuna a contemporary of Kanishka whose date is also not firmly known (58 B.C., 78 A.C. or 120 A.C.). Most of the modern scholars hold that Nagarjuna flourished in the second half of the second century of the Christian Era and that whether he was a contemporary of Kanishka or not, he was a contemporary and friend of the Satavahana king Gautamiputra Yajna Sri (166-196 A.C.). A recent finding is that this Gautamiputra ruled between 62 and 86 A.C.

Nagarjuna came of a wealthy Brahmin family of Vidarbha. His father, according to Tibetan tradition, found astrologically that the son's span of life was short and to prolong his life made him a recluse. He was sent to Nalanda where he became disciple of the great sage Rahulabhadra and underwent a thorough training in all the faculties of studies open at Nalanda at the time. In Chinese tradition Nagarjuna received his first education in Vidarbha in all branches of Brahmanic learning but being not satisfied with that he went to Nalanda.

It is likely that after his ordination Nagarjuna was for quite some time a monk of the Sarvastivada sect. He could not however subscribe to the realism of the Sarvastivada and joined the Mahayana. He is known to have wandered as a pilgrim student from the Himalayas to the seas and in the course of these sojourns he came across the records of sermon on Transcendental Wisdom. For long he was the chief abbot of Nalanda and was renowned as a staunch disciplinarian. As a seat of knowledge (*jnana*) and a citadel of discipline (*vinaya*), Nalanda soon outshone Vajrasana.

Nagarjuna's second home was the land of the two rivers: Godavari and Krishna and he seems to have spent the later years of his life there. While his chief residence was on the Sripurvata he was the leading figure in the nearby seat of learning in the township of Dhanyakataka. The archaeological remains of Amaravati and Nagarjunikonda contain traces indicating Nagarjuna's administrative and organizing abilities as well

as his interest in architecture and sculpture. He harnessed the piety of the Satavahana king for his religious and academic projects.

Nagarjuna's last days are not clear in history. From the mass of legends preserved in Tibetan it appears that he gave away his own life to save the life of a friend's son. Stories of such dedications to save lives of others are not unknown in Asia.

Great as a scholar, great as a teacher, great as an exponent, great as an organizer, Nagarjuna was above all a sage who realized the illusion of mundane existence. It is not strange that myths and legends should have cropped over his memory. A second Nagarjuna, an alchemist and a Tantrik saint, was in later days identified with the great Madhyamika exponent. Works of this alchemist Nagarjuna as well as some books on art and iconography came to be attributed to the great Nagarjuna.

Treatises and tracts which are authentic compositions of Nagarjuna may be enumerated thus: (1) *Mula Madhyamika Karika*, (2) *Mahaprajnaparamita Sastra*, (3) *Dvadasa Nikaya Sastra*, (4) *Dasabhumi-Vibhasa Sastra*, (5) *Sunyata Saptati*, (6) *Yukti Sastika*, (7) *Vigraha Vyavartani*, (8) *Suhrillekha* and (9) *Ratnavali*.

Items 1 and 7 are available in original Sanskrit, items 2 and 3 are found only in Chinese translation and all except 2 and 3 are available in Tibetan translations. Many works attributed to Nagarjuna are considered doubtful but are perhaps authentic with later amendments and interpolations. *Akutobhaya* and *Prajnadanda* belong to this category. Works on medicine and chemistry are of the second Nagarjuna. Many tracts and extracts in Jamgon and other collections are attributed to Nagarjuna. Modern scholars have not yet investigated the Tibetan books outside Tanjur.

While the controversies due to paucity of archaeological and chronological data and plenitude of legends and myths will perhaps never be solved to the satisfaction of all, Nagarjuna will ever remain a landmark in the history of man's morals. Discovery of Prajna Paramita and formulation of Sunyata had consequences flowing much beyond Nagarjuna's life or India's history.

To use modern language, we can say that Nagarjuna discovered the records of the Buddha's secret sermon called Prajna Paramita (Transcendental Wisdom) among an obscure tribe with serpent totem. The Prajna Paramita, as the name suggests, is not ordinary wisdom. It undoubtedly goes beyond the original teaching, that is, the Four Truths and the Law of Causation. It, however, in no way contradicts or rejects the original teaching; the Second Turning of the Wheel of Law, as the revelation of the Prajna Paramita is known, is a corollary to the First Turning of the Wheel.

The Prajna Paramita literature consisting of numerous treatises and tracts—elaborations and abridgements—repeats and re-iterates one basic idea that in Absolute Reality there is no change or that there is no origination or cessation, no coming in or going out or that the real is neither *atman* nor *anatman*. In other words all phenomena are unreal; that is, all *dharma*s or objects of thought or elements of existence are endowed with only a conditional or relative existence. The *vedana* (feeling), *sanjna* (concept) and *sanskara* (conformation) are all illusions. The truth is neither *sasvata* (eternal) nor *asasvata* (non-eternal) but pure *sunya* (voidness). The Transcendental Wisdom is realization of the absolute cessation of all appearance. The Perfect Bodhisattva, that is, the saint who is determined to help an infinite number of souls to attain Nirvana, is

aware that there are no beings—not even the being Bodhisattva and that there is no bondage or no salvation.

All this is an antidote to ego in any form and is designed to wean the believer from any attachment to any sense of merit, spiritual attainment or final victory. Even if the end (*Nirvana*) is unreal in the sense that it is incomprehensible, endeavour for the end, that is, liberation from sorrow, is inevitable. The reward is not in the goal but in the striving for it. The Prajna Paramita literature with all its prolificity and repetition develops the concepts of Impermanence (*anitya*), Sorrow (*duhkha*) and Non-self (*anatman*), that is, the concepts which the Buddha enunciated at Sarnath.

Nagarjuna's task was to expound the negativist doctrine of Prajna Paramita and to establish that it was the efflorescence of the original. He forged a dialectic which avoided the extremes of affirmation and rejection and which thus came to be called Madhyamika (the central position).

Nagarjuna denied the scope for any categorical description in the pursuit of ultimate reality (*paramartha satya*). Existence and non-existence (*asti-nasti*), soul and non-soul (*atma-anatma*)—none of the opposites are unconditionally valid. Even the opposed notions of actor (*karaka*) and action (*karma*) are valid conditionally. If we accept the reality of actor (*karaka : atman*) we cannot deny the reality of action (*karma*); if we accept the reality of action we cannot deny its author. So all our concepts are relative or conditional. This is true of our scheme of values, good and evil, *papa* and *punya* or even *samsara* and *nirvana*. The ultimate reality thus consists of *sunyata* (voidness) which exists as space (*akasa*) exists. Are we then to reject the reality or validity of the Four Truths or the Law of Causation? Nagarjuna's answer is a categorical "No".

If any object exists by itself it is absurd to speak of its origin, end and all that; it is redundant to describe that object as real or not. The open sky (*akasa*) is there and no body disputes its existence. The same is true of the Law of Causation. The interdependence between the different points of the chain is beyond any dispute. The points exist only with reference to one another, that is, they are conditional or relative; yet the whole process is inexorable. That is why one who realizes the *pratityasamutpada* realizes the Four Truths. This realization is attained in the second stage of *sadhana* (endeavour for liberation) where wisdom (*prajna*) is the means. In the first stage the means are ethics and meditation, that is, the Eight Fold Way.

The stage of wisdom can be reached only after the stage of ethics and meditation has been covered. Nagarjuna's negativism was no ally of epicureanism. In practice as in theory Nagarjuna firmly adhered to the validity of conduct. His renown as the chief abbot at Nalanda was as much due to his learned exposition as to his rigid observance of discipline (*vinaya*). Nagarjuna's Friendly Epistle (*Suhillekha*) intended to enlighten the Satavahana king on doctrinal matter is confined to the first stage of *sadhana* and even as that it is largely a moral exhortation of non-denominational character. The stanzas culled below indicate Nagarjuna's *dharma* (religion).

"Knowing the riches to be unstable and void, give according to the moral precepts, to Bhikshus, Brahmanas, the poor and friends, for there is no better friend than charity".

"Exhibit morality faultless and sublime, unmixed and spotless, for morality is the supporting ground of all eminence, as the earth is of the moving and immovable".

“Exercise the imponderable transcendental virtues of charity, morality, patience, energy, meditation, and likewise wisdom, in order that, having reached the farther shore of the sea of existence, you may become a Jina prince”.

“View as enemies: avarice, deceit, duplicity, lust, indolence, pride, greed, hatred and pride concerning family, figure, glory, youth, or power”.

“Do not look after another’s wife; but if you see her, regard her, according to her age, like your mother, daughter, or sister; if you love her then purify your thought about her”.

The Sceptre of Wisdom (*Prajnadanda*), attributed to Nagarjuna in Tibetan tradition, is a sceptre of *niti* (morality) for householders.

History has no parallel to such amoral cultivation of morality. Morality in Sunyavada (ideology of voidness) is a categorical imperative in the most imperative form.

ARYADEVA

Nagarjuna's successor at Nalanda was Deva or Aryadeva. Aryadeva, according to Chandrakirti's account preserved in Tibetan, was the son of the king of Sinhala and renouncing the world after being anointed the crown prince he came to South India and eventually became Nagarjuna's disciple.

Yuan Chwang relates the following story of Aryadeva's admission to discipleship of Nagarjuna. On reaching Nagarjuna's place Aryadeva asked a pupil to announce to the Master that he had come to discuss the doctrine. Nagarjuna sent his bowl filled with pure water. Aryadeva put a needle into it. The pupil took it back and Nagarjuna, delighted with this silent eloquence, admitted the stranger. Bowl full of pure water signified Nagarjuna's knowledge full of purity and the needle indicated that the stranger had reached the bottom of this knowledge. After discussion Nagarjuna was fully satisfied with the abilities of Aryadeva and designated him to be his successor.

The choice was indeed prophetic for Aryadeva became the most effective champion of Madhyamika. Succeeding Nagarjuna as the abbot of Nalanda he lived there for a long time. He was a master debator and measured his strength with the exponents of Vaiseshika and Sankhya in Prayag, Vaisali, Chola, etc. His most historic bout was with the great Vedic scholar of Saivite leanings, Matricheta, also known as Durdharsha for his great polemical abilities. The monks of Nalanda provided a special target for Matricheta who harangued them often till the arrival of Aryadeva. Matricheta was totally vanquished by Aryadeva and had to seek ordination into Buddhism. Tibetan tradition is firm that Asvaghosha, originally a Brahmin and then a Sarvastivadi, was converted by Aryadeva to Mahayana. Asvaghosha's conversion at the hands of Aryadeva to Mahayana is a common place theme in Tibetan frescoes and silk-paintings. It is now generally accepted that Asvaghosha was a contemporary of Kanishka.

Aryadeva spent his last years in Kanchi and was very likely murdered by the pupil of a Tirthika master he defeated earlier. In Chinese tradition Nagarjuna, Aryadeva and Asvaghosha are referred to as the great ones of ancient times. Considerably younger in age than Nagarjuna, Aryadeva survived his master for a number of decades.

Following are some of the many works of Aryadeva: (1) *Chatusataka*, (2) *Sata Sastra*, (3) *Chittavisuddhiprakarana* and (4) *Madhyamika-hasta-valaparakarana*.

All these are available in Tibetan and Chinese translations. Fragments of item 3 are available in Sanskrit.

Aryadeva's greatness rests on two facts. He defended the *sunyata* theory not only against other Buddhist schools but also against the Brahmanical schools. Secondly his expression had matchless lucidity; his expression was simple and his examples were from familiar incidents of everyday life.

Nagarjuna said that the doctrine of the Buddha had two facets; one ordinary in which the deeper meaning remained hidden and the other extra-ordinary. The first is for discipline of mind and the second for its enlightenment. One can reach the second only through the first.

Aryadeva brought out the distinction between the two thus: Those who long to go to heaven love religion but those who seek deliverance go in for the highest truth. Ordinary man requires ordinary language just as you can explain an object to a foreigner only if you use the foreigner's language. The doctrine of *sunyata* is good medicine if it is used sparingly, otherwise it is poison indeed.

About efficacy of rituals for purification of mind Aryadeva said: If salvation could be attained by means of the Ganges water then all fishermen would attain salvation and more particularly all the fish in the river.

Reference has been made above to Aryadeva's death. The assailant who pierced him with sword was sought to be punished by his pupils. Aryadeva's last words were: "Everything is unreal. Reflect upon the true meaning of all things in the world of phenomena. Where is oppression or cruelty? Who is pierced or murdered? If you recognize the true nature of all things, then there is neither the murdered nor the murderer. Who is a friend and who is a foe? Who is the murderer and who is the murdered?" In his death as in his life Aryadeva was the true follower of *prajnaparamita*.

[It is relevant to note here that those who accepted the *Prajnaparamita* as the *Buddhavachana* (the word of the Buddha) formed the Vehicle known as Mahayana. Those who refused to accept this, remained Sarvastivadis, were called Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle) by Mahayana and are now known as Theravada.

Right from the time of the Nirvana there was a persistent rumour through generations that the Buddha had preached a higher truth to a select few and that this truth was to be revealed after a passage of five centuries from the Nirvana, that is, the higher truth was to be propagated only when the believers had practised the lower truth. Nagarjuna who flourished four to five hundred years after the Nirvana claimed to have found the records of the higher truth from the Nagas.

The doctrine of the secret sermon on higher truth (*prajnaparamita*) may be expressed thus: The believer should constantly practise the six *paramitas* (virtues) with full awareness of unreality of all phenomena. He is to strive for the enlightenment and liberation of all beings.]

ASANGA

Asanga, the reputed founder of the Yogachara school, probably flourished in the fifth century A.C. Some place him in the fourth century A.C. He was born in a Kausika Brahmin family of Purushapura, was the eldest of three sons and had a gifted mother. He received his early education from his mother and qualified himself in grammar, dialectics and other sciences. Buddhism at that time, according to Tibetan tradition, was very much threatened by the "sun worshippers" who destroyed many Buddhist monasteries; there is also reference to the Tajiks (Iranians). The Brahmin lady with obvious Buddhist leanings had a vision that her first born would be the proper protector of Buddhism at this critical juncture and sent him to a Buddhist monastery for further studies. We learn from Chinese sources that Asanga joined the Mahisasaka sect and studied the Sarvastivada literature. He however soon changed over to Mahayana texts but found the Prajnaparamita beyond his grasp. In utter despair he was about to put an end to his life when the arhat Pindola came and taught him Sarvastivada doctrine. He still remained unsatisfied and, according to Chinese and Tibetan sources, went to Tushita heaven and learnt the Sunyata doctrine from Maitreya the future Buddha. Later Maitreya visited him on the earth and recited the Yogacharabhumi.

Modern scholars hold that Asanga's master in Mahayana was a historical person, a saint by the name of Maitreyanatha. Some Indian scholars do not accept the arguments in favour of a historical Maitreyanatha and suggest that Asanga underwent a long period of meditational exercises (*dharmasrota samadhi*) and attained enlightenment which he attributed to the Buddha Maitreya and which he would not claim to be the results of his own endeavour. The first works of Yogachara school namely *Mahayanasutralankara*, *Mahayanasamparigraha Sastra* (available in Chinese translation), *Mahayana-uttaratantra* (available in Tibetan translation) and *Dharmatavibhanga* (available in Tibetan translation) are thus works of Maitreya (Maitreyanatha). Asanga's own compositions are *Yogacharabhumi*, *Abhisamayalankara*, *Mahayanasangraha*, *Abhidharmasamuchchaya* and commentaries on the works of Maitreya.

Though a native of Purushapura, Asanga spent most of his life in Ayodhya and Magadha and was for some years a professor at Nalanda. With his eight disciples and his able

younger Vasubandhu, he was responsible for consolidation of Mahayana in northern India and for propagation of a new school of thought called Yogachara or Vijnanavada.

Asanga's forte was meditation which, in Tibetan tradition, he assimilated from Maitreya and his attitude to religion was more a matter of illumined consciousness than of intellectual apprehension. He was a Mahayana devotee and his anxiety to comprehend the essence of *prajnaparamita* has gone into legend. His realization of *prajnaparamita* was not exactly the same as that of a Madhyamika. He accepted Nagarjuna's theory of *sunyata* but provided his own concept of ultimate reality (*paramartha sat*).

All phenomena are unreal but knowledge of such unreality is *vijnana* (consciousness) or *chitta* (mind). After rejection of all objects the residuary of *vijnana* or *chitta* has to be accepted. When a being realizes the unreality of phenomena he is then firmly seated in his *vijnana* (consciousness). Lack of such consciousness misleads a being. Thus *vijnana* or *chitta* is no illusion. To the question whether ultimate reality is pure void Asanga's reply is that on attainment of enlightenment a being is in *dharmadhatu* (idealistic world of phenomena or noumenal ground of phenomena). That is ultimate reality (*paramartha sat*).

Asanga with his accent on inner illumination thus represented the Yoga (meditation) trend which was undoubtedly as old as the Buddha. There were Buddhist Yogis long before Asanga. He systematised this trend and the tradition of Vajrayana may be traced back to Asanga's time. When one refers to Asanga's approach as a Yogi one cannot omit reference to Asanga's erudition or intellect. Asanga's connexion with the rise of Buddhist logic is a historical fact. But what Asanga felt was that intellect was not enough and that by *yoga* sole reality of mind could be realized.

In Tibetan tradition Nagarjuna and Asanga are sometimes grouped together immediately after the Buddha and are then described as MCHOG-GNYIS (the Two Excellents).

VASUBANDHU

Vasubandhu was the second of three sons of a Kausika family of Purushapura, the eldest being Asanga.

While very young Vasubandhu gained extraordinary proficiency in the Vedas and Brahmanic learning. He then followed the footsteps of his elder Asanga, got ordained as a Buddhist monk and joined the Mahisaka sect. With his sharp intellect disciplined in Brahmanic learning, Vasubandhu quickly made his mark as the leading Sarvastivada exponent. He made a special study of Abhidharma under the tutorship of Sanghabhadra in Kashmir. From Kashmir he went to Magadha. He compiled here *Abhidharmakosha* which remains an authority for all schools and sects of Buddhism still today. He added commentary of his own. In the commentary he criticized the Vaibhashika views and addressed it to his former teacher Sanghabhadra. The latter, a Vaibhashika exponent, decided to come to Nalanda to challenge his former pupil in disputation but died before he could reach there.

In spite of his elder's example and notwithstanding the deep impression produced on his mind by Asanga's *Yogacharabhumi*, Vasubandhu remained a staunch Sarvastivadi for long. This was mainly because Vasubandhu could not accept the extreme negativism of *sunyata*. Asanga however did not cease his efforts and engaged his eight disciples to recite to Vasubandhu select *sutras*. Vasubandhu eventually embraced Mahayana. When he was convinced of the merit of Mahayana he felt so much remorse for his earlier attitude that he proposed to cut off his tongue in atonement. Asanga prevented this by persuading him to harness his intellect in the service of Mahayana. Vasubandhu's role as a Mahayana teacher exceeded his earlier one.

His works as a Mahayana are: (1) *Vijnaptimatratasiddhi*, (2) *Vada* and (3) *Tarkasastra* besides the commentaries on *Panchavinsatisahasrika*, *Prajnaparamita*, *Dasabhumika*, *Pratityasamutpada Sutra*, *Sutralankara* etc. His commentaries are no less important than his original works; they are more in the nature of critiques.

Vasubandhu enjoyed the patronage of the Gupta emperors and built a number of monasteries with the munificence of the nobility.

As the abbot of Nalanda he had a distinguished career and had built a band of distinguished disciples around him. Dignaga was one of them. Vasubandhu was mostly a resident of Ayodhya where he died.

Vasubandhu combined a great originality of mind with an astounding erudition. His *Abhidharmakosha*, which he had written when he was not a follower of Mahayana, is an authority for both the Vehicles. In this study we are however concerned with Vasubandhu as a Mahayana scholar and his contributions as such.

His very late conversion to Mahayana has been described above. This was because his forte was intellect and his conversion meant a long-drawn intellectual process. He indeed accepted the *prajnaparamita*. He however re-inforced the Mahayana by his own scholarship and interpretation.

The concept of *chitta* (mind), Vasubandhu points out, is in the original teaching and quotes this saying of the Buddha: "The entire universe is nothing but the *chitta*". Vasubandhu is preeminently a scholar—unlike Asanga who is preeminently a sage—and thus prefers the word *vijnana* (consciousness) to the word *chitta* (mind). The whole world is nothing but projection, reflection or manifestation of consciousness. As long as consciousness does not settle down to its sole (own) reality, that is, so long as consciousness is wandering restlessly and suffers from hallucinations, illusions and frustrations, the being is not free from conflict or split or subject-object relations. When the being is free from such complex, the being attains super-mundane knowledge (*lokottarajñana*) and visualizes the pure reality (*vijnapti matrata*). This is Nirvana.

The edifice of Vasubandhu's philosophy is as vast as it is complex and to build this he had to devise his own systems of epistemology, semantics and logic.

[According to some there was a later Vasubandhu also a great scholar.]

DIGNAGA

Dignaga was very likely Kalidasa's contemporary. Kalidasa's date is still in dispute and all that can be said is that the poet, who dreaded Dignaga's "rude hand", flourished somewhere between 400 and 550 A.C. Dignaga probably flourished at the end of the fifth century A.C. This is in keeping with Tibetan tradition which assigns Dignaga to nine hundred years or more after the Nirvana.

He was born in a Brahmin family of Sinhavaktra near Kanchi. At an early age he was converted to Buddhism by Nagadatta, a scholar belonging to Vatsiputriya sect. The Vatsiputriyas admitted the existence of a real personality (*pudgala*) which was neither the same nor different from the constituents (*skandhas*). In the course of his study of the Tripitaka with Vatsiputriyas Dignaga was required to meditate on the nature of *pudgala*. Far from reconciling himself to this concept of soul he criticized this. He was therefore turned out of the Vatsiputriya sangha. He later met Vasubandhu and became his disciple. With Vasubandhu he studied the Tripitaka again besides specialising in logic. As Vasubandhu's pupil Dignaga subscribed to the theory of *vijnapti matratā* (consciousness only) and after completing his studies at Nalanda he applied his knowledge of logic and skill as dialectician to the exposition of Mahayana doctrine.

Abhidharmakosha-marma-pradipa and *Astasahasrika-prajnaparamita* (both available in Tibetan translations) are perhaps Dignaga's works while he was yet a student. These are manuals for students. As a dialectician Dignaga first projected the Mahayana, particularly Vijnanavada, in a series of small tracts and later condensed them all in a grand treatise *Pramanasamuchchaya*. Of all these works (*Alambanapariksha*, *Trikalapariksha*, *Hetuchakrahamaru*, *Nayamukha*, *Pramanasamuchchayavritti*) not a single one has come down to us in original; these are all however available in Tibetan and Chinese translations. *Nyayapravesa* of which Sanskrit text is available is perhaps not an in extenso reproduction from Dignaga's original. Otherwise the only extant compositions of Dignaga are quotations which other Sanskrit writers made from Dignaga and the *Prajnaparamita Pindartha*.

Dignaga seemed to have worked in different parts of India to propagate his views.

While in Nalanda he had defeated noted Brahmin dialecticians like Sudurjaya and converted them to Buddhism. Later in his countrywide travels, particularly in Odivissa, Maharasthra and Dakshina, he systematically provoked exponents of other schools to enter into disputation with him and attained great renown by haranguing and vanquishing the foremost scholars of the day. The logic which began with Asanga and developed with Vasubandhu now became in Dignaga's hands a formidable instrument for the spread of Mahayana.

Pramanasamuchchaya roused the jealousy of the great scholar Krishnamuniraja who challenged Dignaga to a debate somewhere in the Vindhya. Dignaga vanquished him not once but thrice so that Krishnamuniraja became his bitter enemy. Dignaga felt that far from winning him over he had made Krishnamuniraja an enemy. Amity and not enmity was the desideratum for a Buddhist. In remorse he decided to prepare for Nirvana after orthodox ideal. The Mahayana ideal was to be a Bodhisattva, that is, to aid others in attaining Nirvana. Manjusri, it is said, appeared in a vision and persuaded him to continue his efforts for the enlightenment of the world thus: "How have you given up your great purpose and fixed your mind on your individual benefit with selfish aims giving up the ideal of saving all?" Dignaga then resolved to complete his works.

Dignaga probably spent his last years in Odivissa where he died.

Dignaga was totally opposed to authority and thus challenged and examined the two accepted sources of knowledge: Perception and Inference. In doing so Dignaga sometimes differed from or contradicted his master Vasubandhu even.

Regarding infallibility of perception Dignaga pointed out that perception might mean: fictions of the understanding, inadequate (or even lack of) physical comprehension etc. So perception by itself was no safe ground for knowledge. Inference too was not infallible, for instance, in the relationship of fire, smoke and hill the middle term was the problem. Dignaga put forth numerous examples as fallacies of perception or fallacies of inference. He therefore called for valid sources of knowledge or *pramana*.

Here we are not so much concerned with the mechanics which Dignaga applied to demolish the Sarvastivada (particularly Vaibhashika) theories as with Dignaga's own finding.

"Transcendental Wisdom (Prajnaparamita) is non-dual knowledge, and that is the Perfect Being (Tathagata). The treatise and the track as leading to this end have the same appellation". This is how Dignaga sums up the Prajnaparamita doctrine and holds that intuition trained through intellect leads to the realization of the non-dual: the Absolute or the Reality.

DHARMAKIRTI

Dharmakirti was born in a Brahmin family of Tirumalla (Trimalay) in Choda (Chola) country, that is, north Tamil. His father was Parivrajaka Rorananda. In Tibetan tradition Dharmakirti is contemporaneous with king Srong-tsen Sgam-po. Tibetan tradition also makes Dharmakirti a contemporary and a nephew of Kumarila, the great exponent of the Brahmanical system of Mimamsa. Srong-tsen Sgam-po and Kumarila flourished in the Seventh Century A.C. While Yuan Chwang (in India between 630 and 644 A.C.) does not mention Dharmakirti, I-tsing (in India between 671 and 695 A.C.) speaks eloquently of him. It is thus likely that Dharmakirti came into eminence towards the middle of the Seventh Century A.C.

Endowed with a sharp intellect Dharmakirti mastered the Brahmanical scriptures and philosophy while an adolescent. He took interest in the literature of non-Brahmanical doctrines and soon discovered that the Buddha's teachings did not have the shortcomings he had detected in Brahmanical doctrine. He gave expression to his esteem for Buddhism by changing over to the dress of an *upasaka* (lay devotee). On being excommunicated by the Brahmins he journeyed to the north and ultimately reached Nalanda. Acharya Dharmapala ordained him as a monk. He soon mastered the Tripitaka and the Mahayana *sutras* and *dharanis*. He then directed himself towards dialectics obviously to meet the challenge of the Brahmanical counter-attack on Buddhism. He became a pupil of Isvarasena a disciple of Dignaga. Dharmakirti soon surpassed his master in the appreciation of Dignaga's contributions as openly conceded by Isvarasena. With his master's permission he proceeded to compose in verse an elaborate critique of Dignaga and called it *Pramanavartikakarika*.

Dharmakirti's main task was to meet the Brahmanical counter-attack on Buddhism. Kumarila was the principal adversary of Buddhism in the Seventh Century A.C. According to Tibetan tradition Dharmakirti took the guise of an ordinary labourer, entered Kumarila's household as a servant, endeared himself to the entire family by his work and eventually mastered the art of disputation as forged by Kumarila. Later he met Kumarila in open contest and vanquished him totally. While the debate between Dharmakirti and Kumarila might be a historical reality—and Dharmakirti was probably the only Buddhist who could outwit Kumarila, the assertions that Kumarila was Dharmakirti's

uncle and that Kumarila became Buddhist are not corroborated by historical evidence. Dharmakirti is also known to have defeated in arguments many Jains and other non-Buddhist teachers in the Vindhyas where he spent some years in meditation.

He spent his last years in Kalinga (Odivissa) where he built a monastery.

By literary compositions as well as propaganda and polemics Dharmakirti undoubtedly retarded the decline of Buddhism. He seems to have been more successful in the north than in the south.

Dharmakirti's works on logic are 1) *Pramanavartika* (with commentary); 2) *Pramanavinischaya*; 3) *Nyayabindu*; 4) *Hetubindu*; 5) *Sambandhapariksha*; 6) *Vadanyaya* and 7) *Santanantara-siddhi*. Items 1 and 3 are available in original Sanskrit.

The science of *pramana* (logic) as Dharmakirti built from the foundations of Dignaga was systematically applied to demolish all the non-Buddhist schools of thought, besides the extreme Buddhist realism. Thus concepts of *Nityata* (permanence), *Atman* (soul) and *Isvara* (god) and the philosophies of *Nyaya* (based on perception, inference, comparison and testimony), *Vaisesika* (based on particularization of substance), *Sankhya* (based on evolution of the universe through two distinct but complementary forces), *Mimansa* (based on Vedic ritualism) and Jainism (based on plurality of souls) came under the fire of Dharmakirti's *pramana*.

Dharmakirti's own philosophy was the subjective idealism of *Vijnanavada* with emphasis on cognition rather than perception or inference. One who does not perceive cognitions cannot perceive their objects. Cognition apprehends itself, it is free from distinction of subject (*grahaka*) and object (*grahya*). Cognition is the only reality and shines by its own light.

All his talents and efforts were to meet the counter-attack on Buddhism. The teaching of the Buddha being perfect did not require any logic or epistemology for support. To Dharmakirti, as to his spiritual forebear Dignaga, the Buddha was the *prmanabhuta* (Embodiment of Logic). The absolute omniscient Buddha is a metaphysical entity, something beyond time, space and experience and therefore our knowledge being limited to experience, we can neither affirm nor deny his existence, we can neither think nor say anything definite about the Buddha.

If however any philosophy would in any way contradict the teachings of the Buddha, Dharmakirti's knowledge would meet the challenge. For instance a theory, not confined to atheists only, is that there is no inevitable cause for an effect or effect for a cause (*a-hetuvada*). One who subscribes to *pratitya-samutpada* (Law of Causation) cannot subscribe to *a-hetuvada*. Dharmakirti had therefore to notice this though for easy rejection only.

A panegyric which, according to Tibetan tradition, the king of a Vindhyan principality inscribed on the gate of his palace during Dharmakirti's sojourn in the Vindhyas may be quoted as an epitaph. "If Dharmakirti, the sun among dialecticians, sets and his doctrines sleep or die, the false doctrines of the heretics will then rise".

GUNAPRABHA AND SAKYAPRABHA

(i)

The panegyric of the Vindhya king was indeed prophetic. With the passing away of Dharmakirti the sun of Buddhism set and the centuries following Dharmakirti saw the steady decline of Buddhism in India. The great leaders of Buddhism realized that in the period of peril rigid enforcement of discipline in the Sangha should be given priority and doctrinal differences should not disturb the unity of the community; exclusiveness or segregation on doctrinal lines was a sin against the Sangha. This was in keeping with the idealism of Mahayana.

Lives of Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha symbolize this trend in the history of Buddhism in India. While Mahayana tradition commemorates them as guardians of purity of the Sangha and as masters of the Vinaya (discipline) literature, the historic fact about them is that they were the later patriarchs of the Mahayana notwithstanding their strong leanings to Sarvastivada (realism). Saints like Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha could not reject the sublime altruism of Bodhisattvavada even though they had different notions of *paramartha sat* (ultimate reality). Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha were indeed the *uttamapurushadvayam* (Two Excellents). Portrayal of Samantabhadra (Bodhisattva of Universal Goodness) on the top of Gunaprabha and Sakyaprabha illustrates the two patriarchs' quest "for the profit of the many; for the bliss of the many". These famous words with which the Buddha exhorted the first preachers of the Dharma found fulfilment in the invocation to Samantabhadra. The devotee, in his invocation, resolves to strive ceaselessly for the profit and bliss of the entire living world, all beings and all species in all directions.

(ii)

Acharya Gunaprabha was born in a Brahmin family of Mathura. In his early life he became proficient in the Vedas and the Brahmanical literature. Not being satisfied with the Brahmanical doctrines, he renounced the worldly life to be a Buddhist monk. He became a pupil of Vasubandhu and studied with equal devotion the Tripitaka as well as the Mahayana sutras. He later specialized in the Vinaya and attained eminence

for his profound knowledge of the Vinaya of all schools. While he stayed in the monastery of Agrapuri he enforced the rules of conduct among the five thousand monks residing there. Gunaprabha was more than a monk or a scholar. He was a saint who had great healing powers. He was flooded with gifts from the laity but these he simply distributed among the needy. Sri Harsha was among the devotees of Gunaprabha.

Details of his life are available from Tibetan sources. If Gunaprabha was a direct disciple of Asanga's brother Vasubandhu and if his devotee, Sri Harsha, was the king of Kanauj (606-647 A.C.), Gunaprabha was a younger contemporary of Vasubandhu and an elder contemporary of Harsha. If there were two Vasubandhus Gunaprabha should be associated with the later and could have survived Harsha.

Gunaprabha's works, as incorporated in Tanjur, are the following: *Bodhisattva-bhumivritti*, *Bodhisattvasilaparivartabhashya*, *Panchaskandhavivarana*, *Vinayasutra*, *Ekottarakarmasataka*, *Vinayasutravrittayahidhanasavyakhananama* and *Vinayasutravritti*.

(iii)

Sakyaprabha was a native of western India and seems to have migrated to Magadha. He was a disciple of Punyakirti and Santiprabha. Some make him a disciple of Gunaprabha while others make him a disciple of the great Santideva. As a contemporary of Santideva (695-743 A.C.) Sakyaprabha can be placed in the eighth century A.C. There is also evidence to believe that Sakyaprabha was in Kashmir in the eighth century A.C. He is known to have spent his last years in Kashmir in propagation of the sacred doctrine.

Sakyaprabha not only mastered the Vinaya but also enriched the Vinaya literature with his own compositions and commentaries. The following works of Sakyaprabha are found in Tanjur: *Mulasarvastivadisramanerakarika* and *Mulasarvastivadisramanera-karikavrittiprabhavati*.

APPENDIX

SANSKRIT—TIBETAN GLOSSARY

बुद्ध	མངས་ཀྱིས།
धर्म	ཚེས།
सङ्ग	དགེ་འདུལ།
बोधिसत्त्व	བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔལ།
मञ्जुश्री	འཇམ་དཔལ།
वज्रपाणि	ཕུག་ཅོན་མི།
अवलोकितेश्वर	སྤྲུལ་རས་གཟིགས་དབང་ལུག
क्षितिगर्भ	མདི་སྤྱིང་པོ།
सर्वनीवरणविष्कम्भिन्	སྤྱིང་པ་གསལ་ཅད་རྣམ་པར་སེལ་བ།
आकाशगर्भ	ནམ་མཁའ་སྤྱིང་པོ།
मैत्रेय	བྱས་ས་པ།
समन्तभद्र	ཀུན་དུ་བཟང་པོ།
षडलङ्काराः	ཤུན་དུག
नागार्जुन	རྟ་ལུག།
आर्यदेव	འཕགས་པ་ལྷ།
असंग	ཐོགས་མེད།
वसुबन्धु	དཔྱིག་གཉེན།
दिङ्नाग	ཕྱོགས་སྒང་།
धर्मकोत्ति	ཚེས་གྲགས།
उत्तमपुरुषद्वयम्	མཚོག་གཉིས།
गुणप्रभ	ཡོན་དན་ཡོད།
शाक्यप्रभ	ཤུག་ཡོད།

गरुड़
नागवत्स
मकर
वामन
हस्ती
पशुराज
सिंह
वृषभ
खड्गी

[illegible][illegible]

प्रवर्निवासानुस्मृतिज्ञानबल
व्युत्पन्नपणत्तिज्ञानबल
आश्रवक्ष्यज्ञानबल

ཤོན་གྱི་གནས་ཇེས་སུ་དན་པ་མཐུན་པའི་སྟོབས།
ཤི་འཕོ་པ་དང་སྟེ་པ་མཐུན་པའི་སྟོབས།
ཟག་པ་ཟད་པ་མཐུན་པའི་སྟོབས།

नागकेसर
चैत्य
स्तूप
चामर
उष्णीष
कुम्भ
कुण्डल
क्लव
चक्र

གྲུ་ཤིང་གི་མེ་དོག
མཚོད་དོན།
མཚོད་དོན།
ང་ལམ།
གཙུག་དོར།
བྱམ་པ།
གདུབ་ཀོར།
ཨ་ལུང་།
འཁོར་ལོ།

चन्द्र
सूर्य
वज्र
पद्म

ཆོ་བ།
ཉི་མ།
རྡོ་རྗེ།
པད་མ།

मुद्रा
आसन

ཕྱག་རྒྱ།
ཁྱི་གདན།

दान
शील
क्षमा
वीर्य
ध्यान
प्रज्ञापारमिता

སྤྱིན་པ།
ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།
བརྟོན་པ།
བརྟོན་འགྲུས།
བསམ་གཏན།
ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཡ་རོལ་དུ་སྤྱིན་པ།

बोधिपक्ष्यधर्म
कल्पलता
दुःख
क्लेश

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱོགས་དང་མཐུན་པའི་ཆོས།
དཔག་བསམ་འབྲི་ཤིང་།
སྐྱུག་བསྐྱུལ།
ཉན་མོངས།

सम्बृत्तिसत्य
परमार्थसत्य
अनुपल्लित

गुणैर्ह्यवदेक्य
देवैर्दस्यवदेक्य
मयैर्ह्यव

भैषज्यगुरु

स्नैह्य

बोधि
प्रतोत्यसमुत्पाद

पुनःपुनः
देवैर्दस्य

अविद्या

मयैर्ह्यव

संस्कार

पुनःपुनः

विज्ञान

दस्यवदेक्य

नामरूप

मयैर्ह्यव

षडायतनम्

देवैर्दस्य

स्पर्श

मयैर्ह्यव

वेदना

हृदय

तृष्णा

पुनःपुनः

उपादान

देवैर्दस्य

भव

पुनःपुनः

जाति

देवैर्दस्य

जरामरण

मयैर्ह्यव

निर्वाण

पुनःपुनः

चत्वारि आर्यसत्यानि

वदेक्यवदेक्य

दुःख

पुनःपुनः

समुदय

गुणैर्ह्यव

निरोध

मयैर्ह्यव

मार्ग

मयैर्ह्यव

अव्याकृत

पुनःपुनः

कर्म

मयैर्ह्यव

कारक

पुनःपुनः

परमार्थस्तु

देवैर्दस्यमयैर्ह्यव

आत्मा

मयैर्ह्यव

अनात्मा
ईश्वर
नित्य
अनित्य
अस्ति
नास्ति
वाद्य
अवाद्य
ग्रहन
ग्राह्य
ग्राहक
प्रमाण
प्रत्यक्ष
अनुमान
पाप
पुण्य
संसार
निर्वाण
शून्यता
चित्त
विज्ञान
ज्ञान
योग
साधना
विज्ञप्तिमात्र
लोकोत्तरज्ञान
संज्ञा
आकाश
धर्म
धर्मधातु
धर्मलोकसमाधि

[illegible]

पुद्गल
स्कन्ध

माध्यमिक
योगाचार
विज्ञानवाद
हेतु
हेतुवाद
अहेतुवाद

त्रिपिटक
सूत्र
विनय
अभिधर्म
तन्त्र
साधन
मण्डल
धारणी
पञ्चज्ञानानि

वेरोचन
अक्षोभ्य
अमिताभ
रत्नसम्भव
अमोघसिद्ध

काश्यप

पादःत्रय
सुदःयौ

दसुःसःया
क्षःपुःरःपदिःकुःया
क्षःपुःरःपदिःकुःया
पादःत्रयः
पादःत्रयः
कुःमेदःपुःसुःया

क्षःसुःदःपादःत्रयः
सःदेःक्षः
पुःदुःया
सःदेःक्षः
कुःदः
कुःपुःसुःया
दःकुःपुःसुःया
पादःत्रयः
पादःत्रयः

क्षःपुःरःपदिःकुःया
क्षःपुःरःपदिःकुःया
पुःदुःया
पुःदुःया
पुःदुःया
पुःदुःया
पुःदुःया

SOME PLACE NAMES

I

AGRAPURI	Probably Agra (Uttar Pradesh).
AYODHYA	In Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh; nearby in the adjoining Gonda district lies the site of Sravasti.
CHOLA	Roughly Trichinopoly and Tanjore districts (Madras); sometimes the Chola empire included many adjoining districts.
DHANYAKATAKA	Dharanikota in Guntur district (Andhra); for long the metropolis of the Satavahanas; adjacent to Amaravati.
KANCHI	Kanchipuram (Conjeeveram) in Chingleput district (Madras).
KUKKUTAPADA	Kukrihar in Gaya district (Bihar).
MAGADHA	Roughly Patna and Gaya districts (Bihar).
ODIVISSA	Orissa.
PRAYAG	Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh); the sands of the confluence of Ganga and Jamuna served as venue for polemics and debates.
PURUSHAPURA	Peshawar, in West Pakistan, was an important centre of Buddhism from the days of Asoka for nearly eleven centuries.
SINHALA	Ceylon; large number of Sinhalese monks resided in the Andhra monasteries.
SRI PARVATA	Nagarjunikonda in Guntur district (Andhra).
TRIMALAYA	Tirumala in Chittoor district (Andhra).
VIDARBHA	Roughly modern Berar in Madhya Pradesh, particularly the valley of the river Wardha. In Nagarjuna's time Vidarbha was included in the Satavahana (Andhra) empire. Racially and culturally Vidarbha was Andhra for long.
VAISALI	Basarh in Muzaffarpur district (Bihar).

II

GATHO	(Ka-thog) the celebrated Nying-ma monastery of Kham; at a
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	height of 13000 ft near the confluence of Yangtse and Dzin chu below Horbo; a ride of three days from Derge to the south.
SAKYA	(Sa-skya), the metropolis of Sakya sect; founded in 1071 A.C.; later became till the rise of the Geluggas the most important establishment in learning and political power; on the bank of Tumchu near its source; south-west of Tashi Lhumpo whence a ride of six days; famed for its library.
SAMYE	(bSam-yas) the first monastery of Tibet; built (C.763 A.C.) by King Tisrong detsen under the guidance of Santarakshita and Padmasambhava; on the north bank of Tsang-po; south-east of Lhasa whence a ride of one day and a half.
TASHI LHUMPO	(bKra-sis-lhunpo) founded by Tsong-kha-pa's nephew Gedundrub (1391-1474 A.C.); adjacent to Shigatse; seat of Panchen Lama.
TSORPHU	(mTshur-phu) the Kargyu (Karma) monastery, founded in 1187 A.C.; main temple built in 1263 A.C. by Karma Pakshi; seat of Gyalwa Karmapa; west of Lhasa whence a ride of one and a half day.

[Much information will be found in CUNNINGHAM: *Ancient Geography of India* ed. Majumdar (Calcutta 1924), RAYCHAUDHURI: *Political History of Ancient India* (Calcutta 1953) and YAZDANI: *The Early History of the Deccan* (Oxford 1960) regarding India and DAS: *Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet* ed. Rockhill (London 1902), TEICHMAN: *Travels of a Consular Officer in Eastern Tibet* (Cambridge 1922) and FERRARI: *Guide to the Holy Places of Central Tibet* ed. Petech & Richardson (Rome 1958) regarding Tibet.]

ORIGINAL SOURCES : TRADITIONS

(i)

Art and Iconography

The two most important Sanskrit sources available on the subject are the *Sadhanas* and the *Nispannayogavali* (both published in the Gackwad Oriental Series, Baroda). In Tibetan there are many works, outside the Tanjur, which detail the rules and usages. Besides the treatise BZO-RIG-GI-THIG-TSHAD, the works of BSTAN-PAI-SGRON-ME, DPAL-LDAN-BLO-GROS-BZANG-PO, KLONG-RDO-BLAMA and SDE-SRID supply information on iconography and symbols. Works like BAIDUR SERPO also yield data. Rules and conventions are however not all. Great artists often expressed their imagination within certain obvious limits. The painter of the present scrolls is known to have given shape to the Buddha, the Eight Masters and the Bodhisattvas as they appeared to him in meditations. In our description of the paintings an attempt has been made to find out how far these conform to canonical requirements. A book on the tradition of Tibetan iconography detailing in particular the symbols is programmed for publication by Namgyal Institute of Tibetology.

(ii)

Lives and Thoughts

The known Sanskrit works, lost as well as extant, have been mentioned in the body of the book. A good Brahmanical compendium is the *Sarvadarsanasangraha* by Madhava available in English translation. The works of the Eight Masters are found in Tibetan translation (Tanjur). Biographies of and traditions regarding Indian sages and scholars are gathered from BUSTON, TARANATHA, KUN-MKHYEN-PADMA-DKAR-PO and SUMPA-MKHEN-PO. Chinese records are also of corroborative value.

(iii)

Sanskrit and Tibetan works

Some accounts in English are RAJENDRALAL MITRA : *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* (Calcutta 1882), HARAPRASAD SASTRI : *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS* (Calcutta 1917), MAURICE WINTERNITZ : *A History of Indian Literature* (Calcutta 1933), GUISEPPE TUCCI : *Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (Rome 1949) and EDWARD CONZE : *The Prajna Paramita Literature* (The Hague 1960). Many of the Sanskrit and Tibetan works are now available in modern publications e.g. of the Asiatic Society (Calcutta), the Academy of Sciences (Leningrad), the Oriental Institute (Baroda), the Bihar and Orissa Research Society (Patna).

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[Intended for non-specialist readers the list is confined to books in English only.]

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